

ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

February 23, 2022



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 1102 South Park Street
Project Name: Welltower
Application Type: Approval for Comprehensive Design Review of Signage
Legistar File ID # [69542](#)
Prepared By: Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector

The applicant is requesting Comprehensive Design Review of signage for an existing property located in a Planned Development (PD) District, which previously had a Planned Development sign package approved by UDC January 23, 2013. This site currently has two ground signs and two above roof signs, all of which are to be modified in this CDR proposal. This site consists of two clinics (UW Health and Access Community Health Center) in a four story building with an attached parking garage. This lot is adjacent to South Park Street (4 lanes, 25 mph) and Fish Hatchery Road (3 Lanes, 30 mph), and is also in UDD #7.

Pursuant to Section 31.043(4)(b), MGO, the UDC shall apply the following criteria upon review of an application for a Comprehensive Sign Plan:

1. *The Sign Plan shall create visual harmony between the signs, building(s), and building site through unique and exceptional use of materials, design, color, any lighting, and other design elements; and shall result in signs of appropriate scale and character to the uses and building(s) on the zoning lot as well as adjacent buildings, structures and uses.*
2. *Each element of the Sign Plan shall be found to be necessary due to unique or unusual design aspects in the architecture or limitations in the building site or surrounding environment; except that when a request for an Additional Sign Code Approval under Sec. 31.043(3) is included in the Comprehensive Design Review, the sign(s) eligible for approval under Sec. 31.043(3) shall meet the applicable criteria of Sec. 31.043(3), except that sign approvals that come to Comprehensive Design Review from MXC and EC districts pursuant to 31.13(3) and (7) need not meet the criteria of this paragraph.*
3. *The Sign Plan shall not violate any of the stated purposes described in Sec. 31.02(1) and 33.24(2).*
4. *All signs must meet minimum construction requirements under Sec. 31.04(5).*
5. *The Sign Plan shall not approve Advertising beyond the restrictions in Sec. 31.11 or Off-Premise Directional Signs beyond the restrictions in Sec. 31.115.*
6. *The Sign Plan shall not be approved if any element of the plan:*
 - a. *presents a hazard to vehicular or pedestrian traffic on public or private property,*
 - b. *obstructs views at points of ingress and egress of adjoining properties,*
 - c. *obstructs or impedes the visibility of existing lawful signs on adjacent property, or*
 - d. *negatively impacts the visual quality of public or private open space.*
7. *The Sign Plan may only encompass signs on private property of the zoning lot or building site in question, and shall not approve any signs in the right of way or on public property.*

Section 33.24(14)(d)6., Signage Criteria for Urban Design District No. 7, indicates the Urban Design Commission shall consider in each case those of the following guidelines and requirements as may be appropriate to signage:

Signage .

a. Guidelines .

- i. Preferred sign types include building mounted signs, window signs, projecting signs, and awning signs.
- ii. Signs should be simple and easy to read.
- iii. Sign colors should relate to and complement the primary colors of the building facade.
- iv. Sign design and placement should fit the character of the building and to obscure architectural details.
- v. Signage should generally be centered within the prescribed signage area of the building.
- vi. Plastic box signs are highly discouraged.
- vii. Internally illuminated signs displaying illuminated copy should be designed so that when illuminated, the sign appears to have light-colored copy on a dark or non-illuminated background.
- viii. Individually mounted backlit letters are an encouraged form of signage.
- ix. The use of small, well-designed building-mounted light fixtures is a preferred method of illuminating signage. No sign or portion of sign shall change its level of illumination more than once every one (1) hour.
- x. Freestanding signs should be attractively designed. Signs should be coordinated with adjoining properties and public street signage to avoid visual clutter.
- xi. Electronic changeable copy signs, if permitted in the District, shall comply with 31.046(1) which requires that electronic changeable copy signs in Urban Design Districts shall not alternate, change, fade in, fade out, or otherwise change more frequently than once every one (1) hour. (Cr. by ORD-09-00091, 8-1-09)

Ground Signs Permitted by Sign Ordinance: This zoning lot is allowed up to two ground signs with a combined net area of 80 sq. ft., and a maximum height of 10' for monument style signs, based off of the prevailing speeds and number of traffic lanes. The ordinance also allows for lots with frontage 500' or more, as well as a vehicle entrance on that frontage, to have an additional monument-style ground sign, no larger than eight feet in height, with 32 sq. ft. per side, located at each vehicle entrance.

Proposed Ground Signage: The applicant is proposing two 9' 2" tall monument styled ground signs, each with a net area of 37 sq. ft. per side, making the combined net area 148 sq. ft. One sign would be located next to the driveway entrance on South Park Street and the second sign would be located at the driveway entrance on Fish Hatchery Road. The signs consist of an aluminum cabinet, with the tenant panels made of routed metal faces and perforated vinyl letters.

Staff Comments: UW Health is updating the look of their signs, and are requesting for two new ground signs in place of the signs approved in 2013. The previously approved signs were 12' tall monument styled ground signs, with a net area of 45.25 sq. ft. per side, making the combined net area 181 sq. ft. Zoning has already approved one sign at the South Park Street entrance, but would like an identical sign at the Fish Hatchery Road entrance, as both streets are principle arterial streets. While the proposal would still have two signs with net area larger then

what the code permits, the proposed net area is smaller than what was previously approved, and the signs would be of a compliant height. The signs are designed to provide clear identification for two separate, but equally significant clinics, and it is important for this site to have proper identification for these clinics, as there is the SSM clinic immediately south of this site. The signs are of high design and create a uniform look. **Recommendation: Staff has no objection to the CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review have been met. This recommendation is subject to further testimony and new information provided during the hearing.**

Canopy Signs Permitted per Sign Ordinance: Summarizing Section 31.071, above-canopy signs can be installed instead of a wall sign, but are restricted to the business name and logo, be constructed of freestanding characters and the logo, have a max height of 2' and the next of the logo being a max size of 4 sq. ft. These signs also cannot be wider than the width of the canopy or the corresponding façade, whichever is narrower. Above-canopy signage may not project further than from the building than the canopy to which it is attached and a sign that crosses architectural detail may not be displayed closer than three feet from the nearest face of the building.

Proposed Signage: The proposed above canopy sign consists of 2' tall individual channel letters with perforated vinyl faces, and would have a total net area of 31.33 sq. ft.

Staff Comments: The applicant is proposing to relocate one of the above roof signs located on the building wing wall to site above the entrance canopy facing South Park Street. The other above roof sign would not be used. The sign would comply with the sign ordinance requirements for an above canopy sign and provide more visibility to pedestrians and vehicular traffic than the above roof signage does. **Recommendation: Staff has no objection to the CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review have been met, with the condition that no other signage is permitted on the building. This recommendation is subject to further testimony and new information provided during the hearing.**

Notes:

- The final CDR documents shall state that all other signage not requiring permits shall comply with MGO 31.